

DIY



# BRISBANE FESTIVAL



Brisbane Festival is an initiative of the Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council

# Florentijn Hofman



## Introducing Messengers of Brisbane

Although conceived prior to the global Coronavirus outbreak, the artwork I developed for Brisbane Festival, *Messengers of Brisbane*, may be prophetic in its timing. This work breathes hope; hope for better days during the Festival and into the future. The distance of the works on rooftops and other high positions indicate aspiration and at the same time question our current situation of social distancing and what freedom means to every individual. The works gift aim and direction in a time where creativity is paramount and the power of imagination must be relied upon to feel a flight synonymous to the bird. The beautiful bright colours, which mimic exactly those found in the natural plume of the Gouldian Finch, encourage people to likewise be colourful, to be amazed by these remarkable creatures. The hat is a very important feature in this work. It is an extension of my practice where I've used it as a tool in many prior works. For me it symbolises celebrating life, enjoying living and being positive, especially during this period but it is also appropriate to all life situations. Being positive makes one live longer and with more quality. While birds in nature are very autonomous, here as large-scale temporary sculptures in Brisbane they will indicate connection and the arrival of a positive message.

Watching over us this September will be a series of three giant Gouldian Finches perched atop key Brisbane locations. This playful and joyous installation is the creation of internationally renowned artist, Florentijn Hofman and is exclusive to Brisbane. Perched along the inner-city river area, these beautiful birds decked out with their bright pink party hats will bring us messages of hope as they fly in for the Festival. Brought to life by Brisbane's very own Urban Arts Projects, these glorious characters will take pride of place this Festival. These birds remind us of our important freedoms as their simple message to us all is to look up and smile.

*Messengers of Brisbane* can be viewed by walk, bike or City Cat.

Various workshops and educational opportunities will be available to become acquainted with these endangered Australian birds. Please visit our website for further information. > [brisbanefestival.com.au](https://brisbanefestival.com.au)

# Winged Wonder

Difficulty / Easy  
Time / 25 Minutes  
Space / Indoors or Outdoors  
Ages / 2+ (Parental guidance needed for steps that require scissors)

Materials needed /  
Printer, paper, glue,  
cardboard, scissors

Grab your glorious wings and imagine your body has become that of a Gouldian finch. Observe your natural surroundings. Are you happy, excited, annoyed or scared about what you see? Where will you nest and what is there to eat? Dwindling finch numbers have been partly attributed to human encroachment into their habitats. Expanding farmland subsumes the trees the birds make their homes in and the grasses they feast in. Frequent and extensive wildfires also cause problems.

Land clearing and overgrazing within finch habitat can have a significant impact and this includes mining development. Coal mine activities are planned for Queensland's Galilee Basin, a significant Black-throated finch habitat. According to the Department of Environment and Science, the Southern subspecies of the population of Black-throated finch has contracted by approximately 80 per cent of its former extent over the last 20 years. Clearing land for the construction of mine sites may reduce the finch habitat further. Other problems such as inappropriate fire regimes, feral animals and exotic grasses add to stresses on the species.

But people are taking action to halt the decline in finch numbers. There are recovery plans in place. You can help out at a local level, too, by reaching out to community conservation groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation or the Queensland Finch Society to volunteer your time or get informed.



## Step 1

Print template and 12 copies (approx 45 feathers per wing for a set that fits a toddler.) Feel free to mix and match from the template options. Alternatively use found materials, recycled paper or even real feathers (make sure you find them on the ground not on a live bird please.)



## Step 2

Find some cardboard and cut 2 pieces roughly the length of your or your child's arms. Cut a slight angle in the top to mimic a birds wing. As a starting point, for a toddler a shape of 180mm high x 400mm wide works well.



## Step 3

Cut a u shape (being sure to leave the 4th side attached as this will create the handle) in the direction of travel roughly 1/3 of the way down the wing. This will be pulled up and used for a handle, so make sure you make it hand holding size.



Steps continued on next page →

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## Step 4

Glue on feathers one at a time on your first wing working your way up from the bottom and slightly overlapping as you go to cover any gaps. Any glue will do, but a hot glue gun is a great way to speed up the process and ensure a stronger hold.



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## Step 5

Fold over any extra bits or trim off with scissors and repeat the same process for the other wing.



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## Step 6

You are ready to fly, give them a try and let your imagination run wild but please remember to stay on the ground, these things are good but not that good!



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## Alternate

Try using some other materials for the feathers! Grab found objects, nature or up-cycle some old material even. Or use the blank templates and go hard on a colouring session. Use the same steps but add your own flair when it comes to the feather steps.



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## Hints

A glue gun is great for quick and strong sticking. Maybe think about making a bird hat while you are at it! Also, parents you are going to want to have your camera ready as these things are super cute on the kiddos.



# Printable Goodies

Print at full size on the best paper you have or if you don't have a printer no stress, just trace over the guides on the following pages with whatever you can find!







